ered only as a secondary text. Before turning to this anthology, young adults must explore the Holocaust testimony and fiction of survivors, such as Primo Levi, Elie Wiesel, Charlotte Delbo and a myriad of others.

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The Birth of a Nation

The Garden. Carol Matas. Scholastic Canada, 1997. 102 pp. $16.99 cloth. ISBN 0-590-12381-5.

The Garden is Carol Matas's sequel to *After the War,* which told the story of the dangerous and illegal odyssey of a group of young Jewish concentration-camp survivors to Palestine at the close of the Second World War. The sequel covers the volatile period between November 1947 and May 1948, the time of the United Nations partition of Palestine, the preparations for British withdrawal, and the increasingly violent hostilities between Arabs and Jews which led ultimately to war upon the establishment of a Jewish state.

As in *After the War,* the point of view belongs to Ruth Mendenberg, whose teenage life has witnessed the horrors of the camps, the loss of most of her family, and the beginnings of hope for a new life and home in Israel. Ruth recovers from her despair through her tending of a symbolic garden whose beauty, sense of peace and renewal, are shattered and trampled as she and her companions struggle through a complex maze of conscience. Escalating violence and death lead to hard ethical decisions. The large questions here explore the moral dilemmas facing the Jews, the choices along the spectrum from passive nonviolence, to defensive or aggressive action, through to terrorism. While the moral stances are articulated by Jewish characters, who are mostly teenage soldiers of the Palmach and survivors of Nazi victimization, it is unfortunate that the Arab experience is given no voice. The possibility of Arab-Israeli harmony, however, is reflected in characters' interactions.

The writing is fast-paced and suspenseful and the images of violence, fear, and death are not cartoon-like; they have weight, reality, and presence. There is no false heroism here and much remorse and uncertainty of what forms a just action in a confused world. The emotional intensity and gravity of the story give the characters more substance than they are drawn with. As in Matas's science fiction, her characters are not as real as her ideas. The moral and ethical uncertainties are never resolved, reflecting the present day state of Arab-Israeli conflict, although Ruth makes a final choice to de-

fend her new home, to survive and rebuild her garden. The open-ended narrative is thoughtful and sombre, leaving questions and issues unanswered and probing the reader's conscience and heart.

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And Peace Never Came

And Peace Never Came. Elisabeth M. Raab. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 1997. 196 pp. $24.95 paper. ISBN 0-88920-292-3.

Told in hauntingly simple prose, this autobiographical novel describes Elisabeth "Boske" Raab's experiences in Auschwitz and afterwards with what sometimes seems likes detachment — the reader only fully realizes the depth of Raab's pain by listening to her silences.

A young married woman with a daughter, Kati, in 1944, Raab, like so many other Jewish Europeans, did not believe that the Nazis posed any danger for her family. Raab's story is told without hindsight; we are given no more knowledge about the implications of events than she herself had as she was led into Auschwitz. Like Raab, we know her family's fate was almost certainly death in the gas chambers only because history has told us. Raab herself cannot.

In every silence and behind every word, are faces, voices, and unspoken memories. Little Kati disappears from the story, as she disappeared from her mother's life; we long to hear that she has survived, that Raab has found her, or even that she has learned of her death; but Raab, unwilling and unable to offer conjecture, remains silent, caught in the unspoken pain that would come to define her.

While I had always believed that 1945 brought a sense of closure, an ending or a new beginning to the survivors of the Nazi death camps, Raab's story is not even halfway over at the end of the European war. She writes of her "liberation" much as she must have experienced it — it is chaotic, uncertain, deeply painful, and impossibly difficult to face. For years, Elisabeth Raab did not speak to any one of the experience that almost destroyed her.

At almost seventy years of age, Boske, on a trip home, is made aware that she has spent decades in silent and unrelenting mourning for the people and places that she has not allowed herself to remember — that her